Blind Persons in the Country

1494. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:
SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news items captioned, "Number of blind may double in 20 years", which appeared in the Times of India, dated the 21st January, 2002;

(b) whether it is a fact that more people in the country suffer from a complete loss of sight, brought on largely by treatable conditions;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the estimated number of blind persons at 18.7 million would be doubled in about 20 years;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the details thereof; and

(e) the steps/precautions taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Nearly 80% of blind persons can be treated for restoration of their vision through Cataract Surgery, provision of glasses and management of other eye problems.

(c) and (d) The estimates published in the Times of India dated 21.01.02 are based on a study conducted in Andhra Pradesh only and therefore cannot be extrapolated to the entire country. Estimated blind persons in the year 2001 would be about 15 million projected on the basis of National Survey (1986—89).

(e) A comprehensive plan of action is being prepared by a working group consitituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under "Vision 2020: The Right to Sight" global initiative aimed at eliminating avoidable blindness in the country. The plan includes controlling blindness due to cataract, glaucoma, diabetes and refractive errors. Special focus will be on prevention and control

of blindness in children. The Vision 2020 initiative aims at reducing avoidable blindness by nearly 50% by the year 2020.

CGHS Dispensaries in Delhi, H.P., Haryana and Punjab

1495. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the places in Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab where Allopathic, Homoeopathic, Unani and Ayurvedic Dispensaries under CGHS are functioning as on 28th February, 2002;

(b) the working hours for examination of patients, collection of local purchase prescriptions and issue of local purchase medicines of each dispensary, State-wise;

(c) the total number of beneficaries visited each dispensary in each States during each month of 2001;

(d) whether Government propose to set up some dispensaries of each treatment in evenings shifts in each State to allow maximum use of facilities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The location of CGHS dispensaries in Delhi indicating the total number of beneficiaries who visited each dispensary is given at Annexure [*See* Appendix 195, Annexure No. 19]

The CGHS (Allopathic) dispensary at Faridabad (Haryana) and the CGHS (Allopathic & Ayurvedic) Dispensary at Gurgoan (Haryana) come under the Administrative control of CGHS Delhi.

Orders have been issued to start one dispensary in Chandigarh in the current financial year. While Medical Officer have been mobilised from other stations, similar exercise has been taken up regarding Para-Medical Staff for making the dispensary operational.

(b) The working hours of CGHS dispensaries for examination of patients is as under:—